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MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

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AUTHORITY

THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI.

MASTER OF KUNG FU

DEATH DUEL
WITH
AGENT SYN!



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TM

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my **father** did, when he raised me in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: that my name means 'The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit,' and that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on Earth... and that to **honor** him would bring nothing but **dishonor** to the spirit of my **name**."

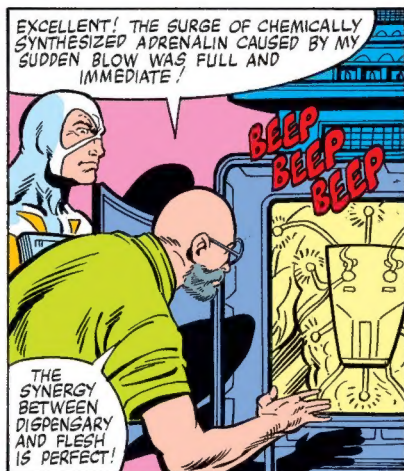
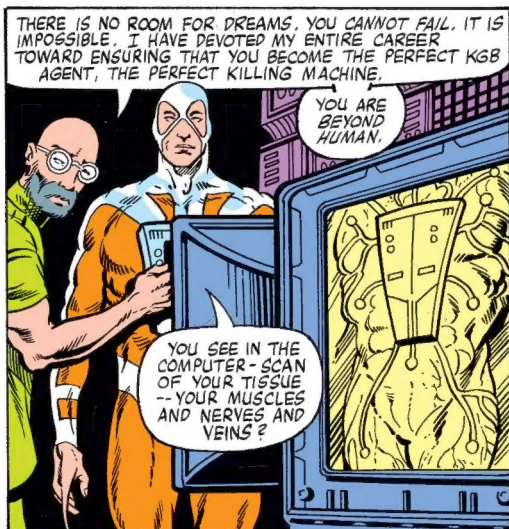
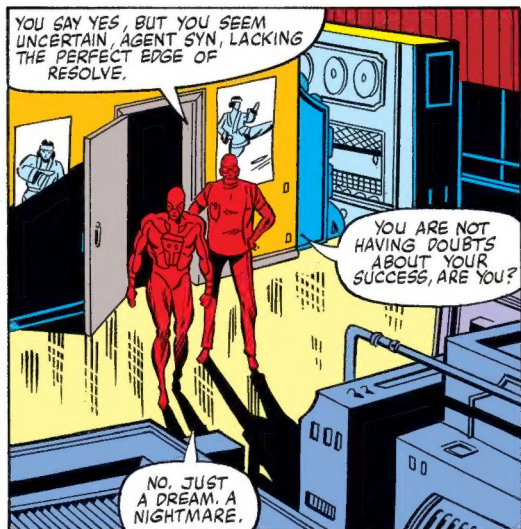
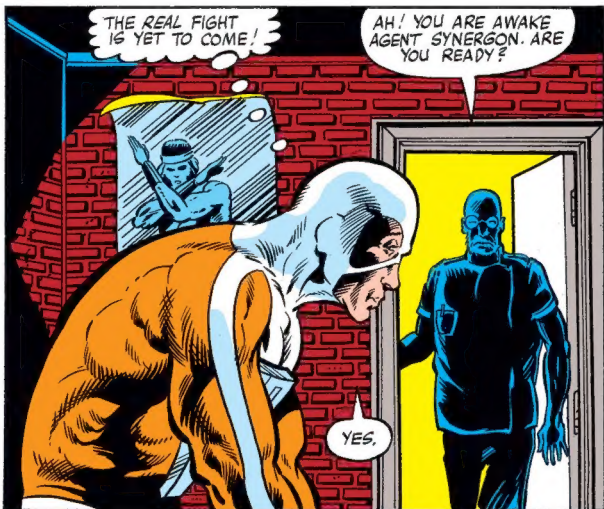
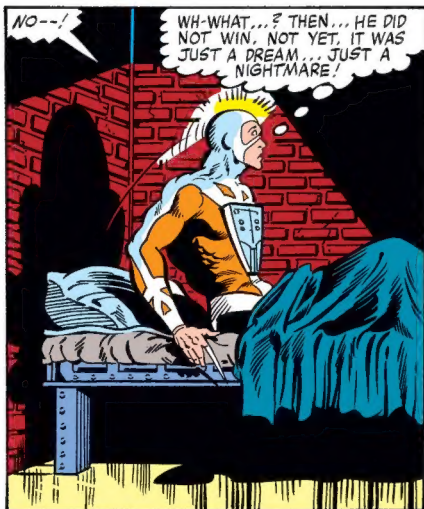
Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!

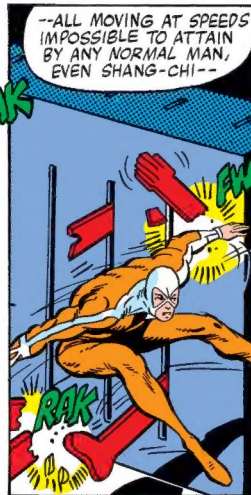
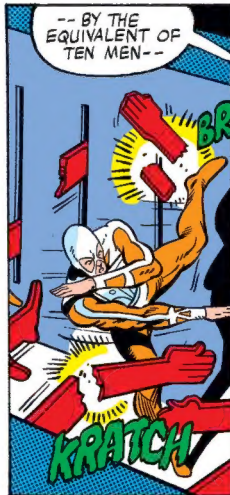
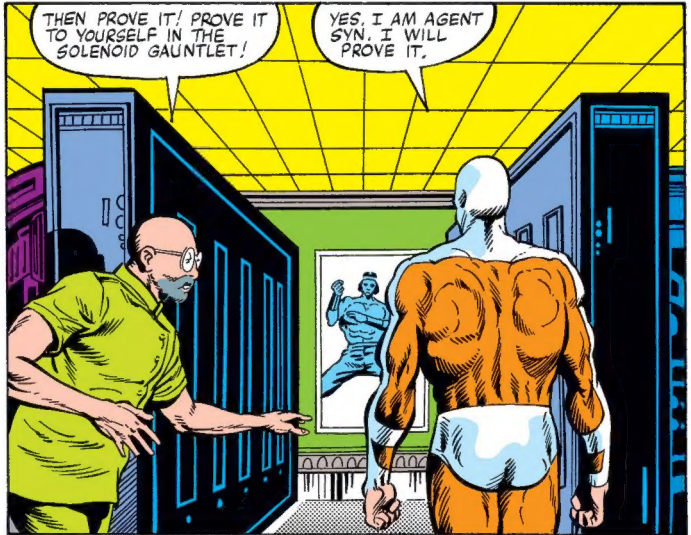
Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

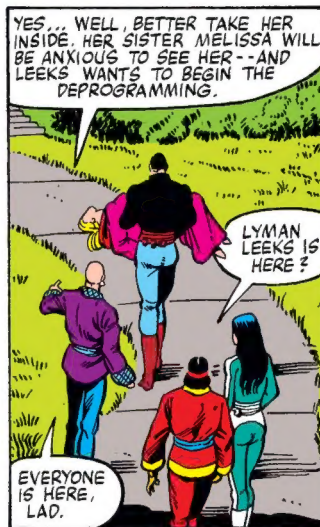
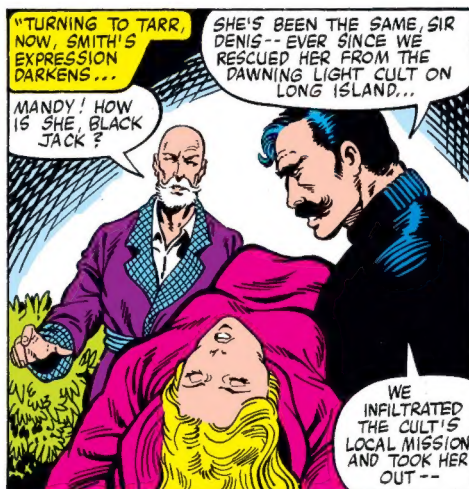
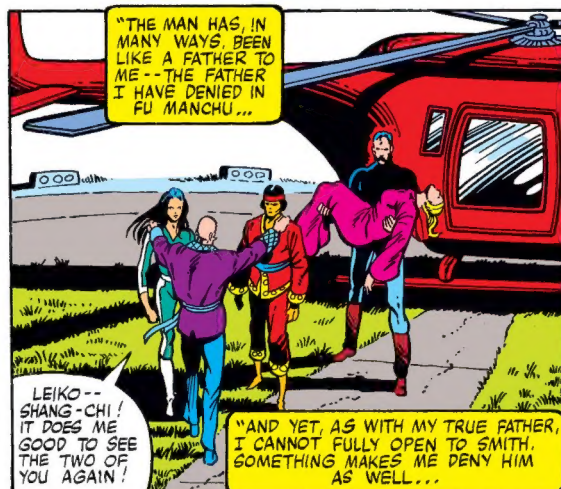
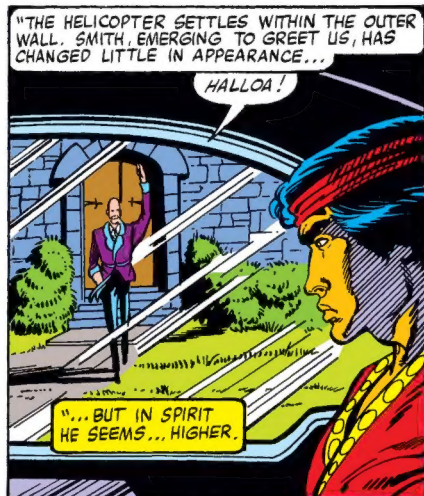
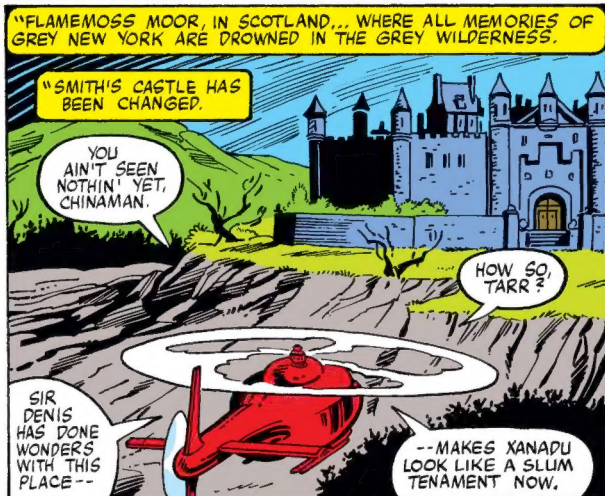
AGENT SYD'S NIGHTMARE



DOUG MOENCH / WRITER MIKE ZECK & GENE DAY / ARTISTS JIM NOVAK / LETTERER BOB SHAREN / COLORIST JIM SALICRUP / EDITOR JIM SHOOTER / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF







NO DOUBT BLACK JACK HAS TOLD YOU WHAT WE'VE DONE HERE, CONVERTING MY ANCESTRAL CASTLE INTO LIVING QUARTERS AS WELL AS A COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT NERVE-CENTER FOR OUR NEW PRIVATE OPERATIONS.

LEEKS--AND EVEN MRS. HAVERSHAM--HAVE COME UP WITH THE OTHERS TO HELP GET THE PLACE IN SHAPE.

FREELANCE RESTORATIONS LTD.

I'VE SPENT RIGHT DOWN TO MY LAST PENNY TO COMPLETE THE RENOVATIONS AND INSTALL EVERYTHING WE'LL NEED. MUCH OF THE PLACE IS STILL CLOSED OFF--

-- BUT I'VE OPENED UP THREE TIMES AS MANY ROOMS AS WE USED BEFORE.

I DISCOVERED SOME RECORDS IN REDHEATH TOWER-- HISTORY OF THE PLACE MOSTLY-- AND LEARNED THAT THE CASTLE WAS ORIGINALLY NAMED STORMHAVEN. QUITE APPROPRIATE FOR WHAT WE HOPE TO DO HERE.

SO WELCOME TO STORMHAVEN, LAD-- AND YOU TOO, LEIKO--

WELCOME TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF OUR NEW ORGANIZATION-- "FREELANCE RESTORATIONS, LIMITED." IT'S AS IF THE PLACE HAS BEEN SLEEPING--AND HAS NOW AWAKENED TO ITS OWN PAST AND OUR FUTURE.

AND FORGIVE ANY CHILDISH PRIDE... BUT I AM RATHER PLEASED WITH THE PLACE.

I... I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT, SIR DENIS...

WOULD YOU CARE FOR THE TOUR?

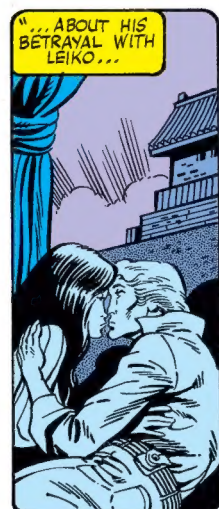
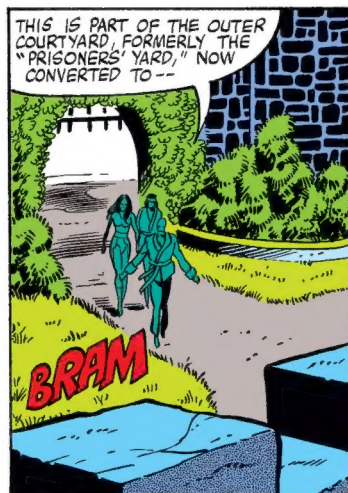
THIS LIVING ROOM IS TWICE AS BIG AS MY ENTIRE FLAT IN SOHO!

YES, BUT I TRUST WE'VE SEALED OFF THE DRAFTS.

STEP LIVELY NOW-- WE'VE MANY ROOMS TO COVER, MANY SIGHTS TO SEE...

FOR EXAMPLE... I MUST CONFESS I'VE RESERVED THE MOST ELEGANT SUITE FOR MYSELF.

THIS IS MERELY THE BEDROOM-- ALL ANTIQUE FURNISHINGS AND APPOINTMENTS, OF COURSE.





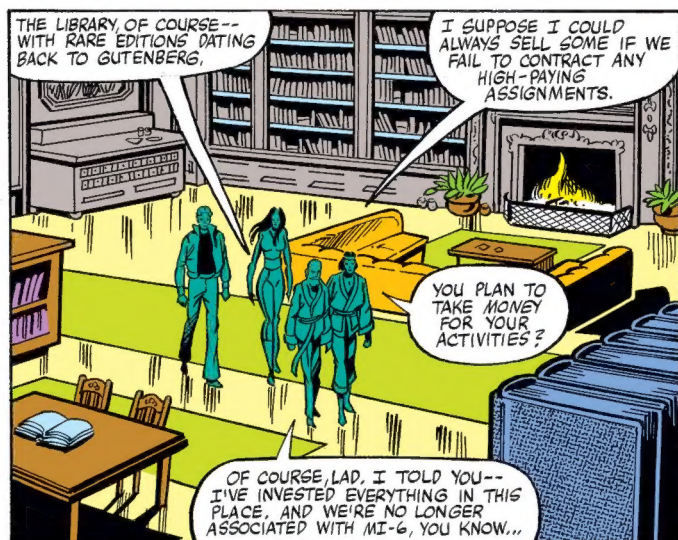
PLEASE, SHANG.



I TOO AM WILLING, RESTON... AND I AM SORRY.

SO AM I, CHI,
SO AM I.

AHEM. WELL IF EVERYONE IS NOT FEELING TOO BITTER-SWEET ABOUT THE PAST... SHALL WE RESUME THE TOUR?



THE LIBRARY, OF COURSE-- WITH RARE EDITIONS DATING BACK TO GUTENBERG.

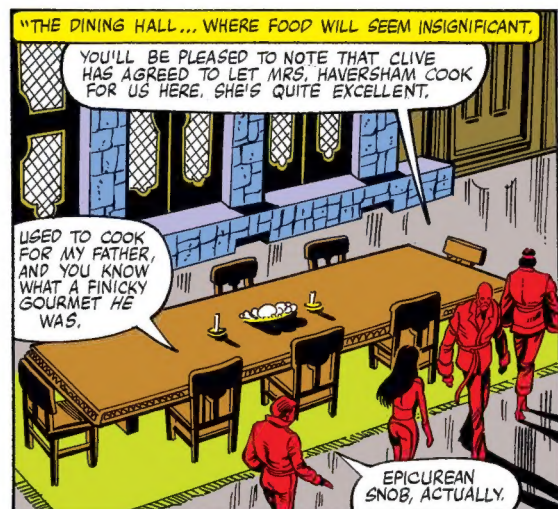
I SUPPOSE I COULD ALWAYS SELL SOME IF WE FAIL TO CONTRACT ANY HIGH-PAYING ASSIGNMENTS.

YOU PLAN TO TAKE MONEY FOR YOUR ACTIVITIES?

OF COURSE, LAD. I TOLD YOU-- I'VE INVESTED EVERYTHING IN THIS PLACE, AND WE'RE NO LONGER ASSOCIATED WITH MI-6, YOU KNOW...



I... SEE.



"THE DINING HALL... WHERE FOOD WILL SEEM INSIGNIFICANT.

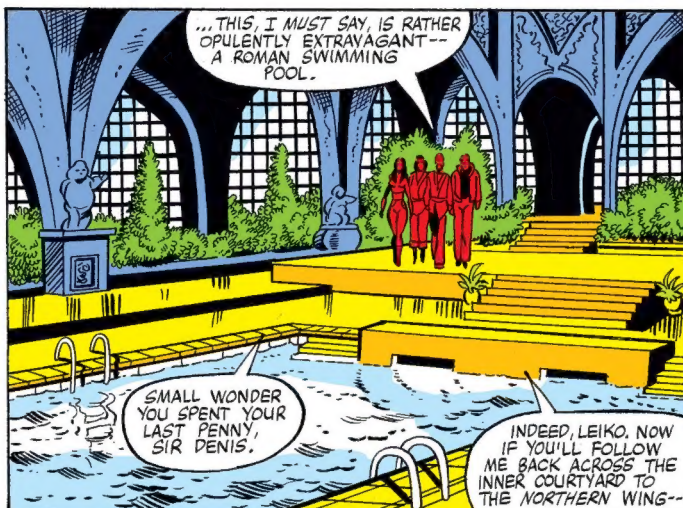
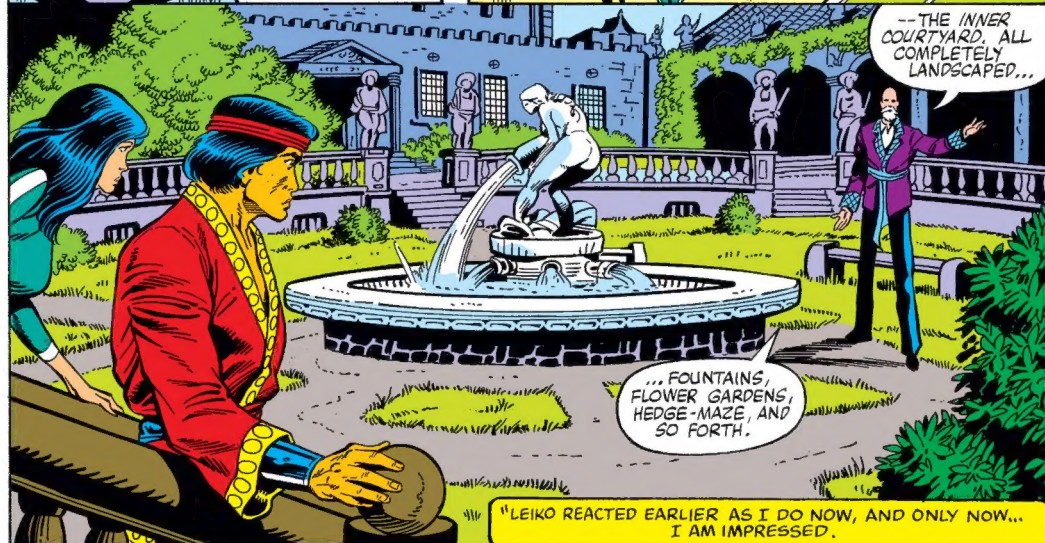
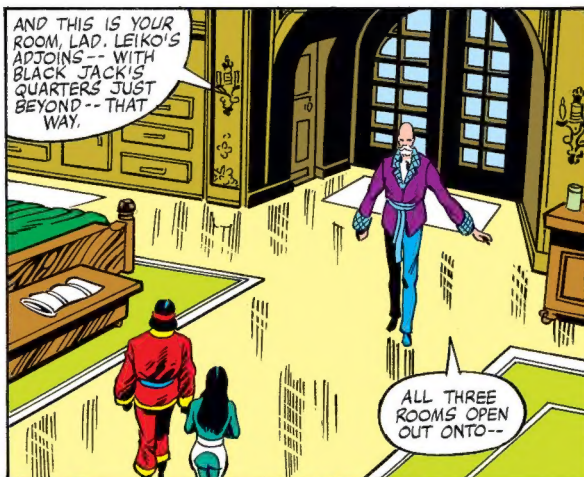
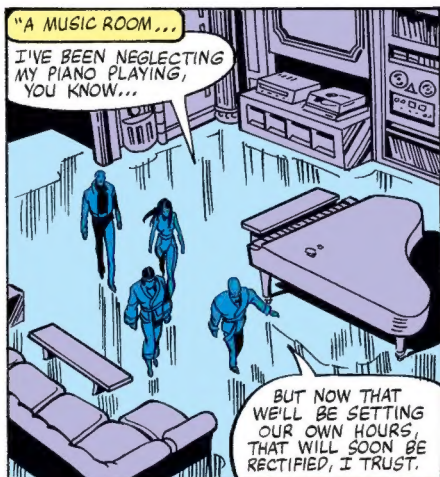
YOU'LL BE PLEASED TO NOTE THAT CLIVE HAS AGREED TO LET MRS. HAVERSHAM COOK FOR US HERE. SHE'S QUITE EXCELLENT.

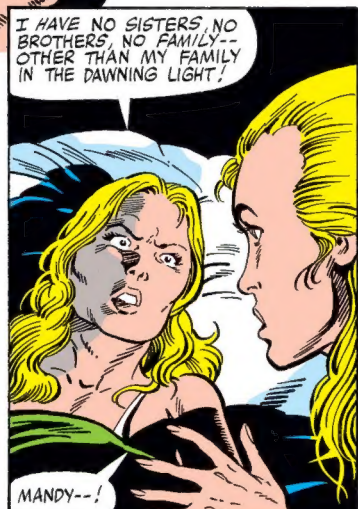
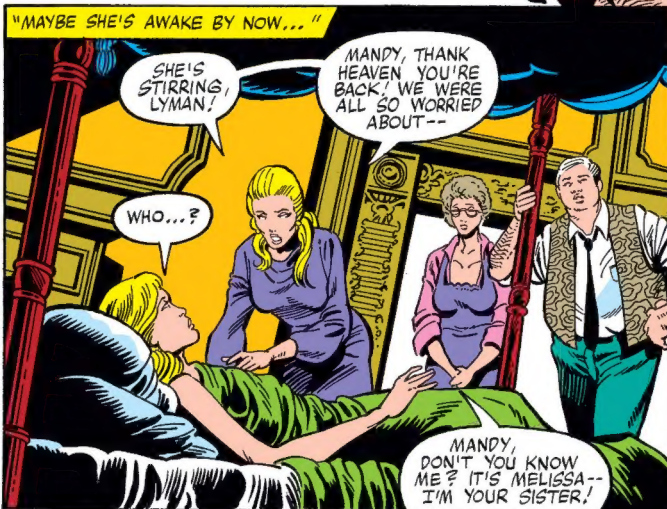
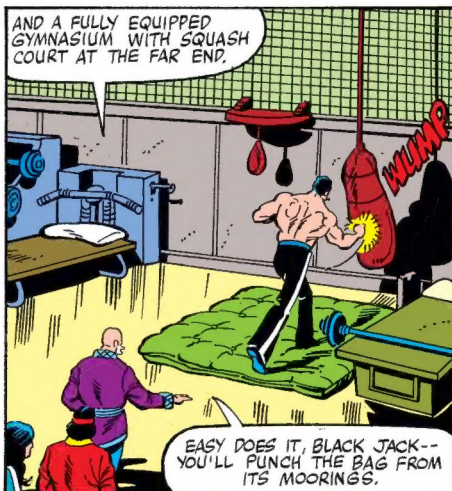
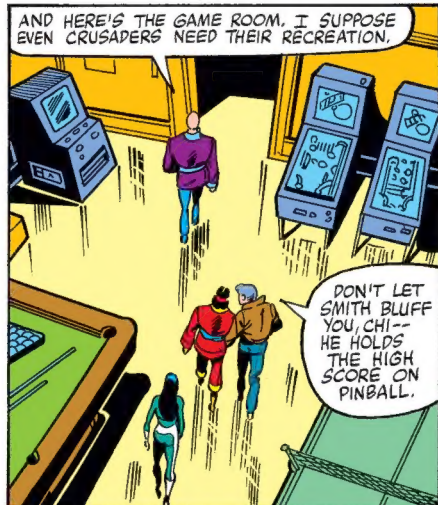
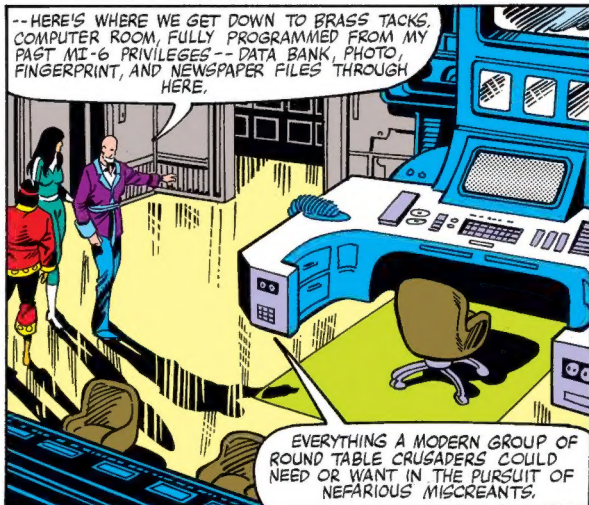
USED TO COOK FOR MY FATHER, AND YOU KNOW WHAT A FINICKY GOURMET HE WAS.

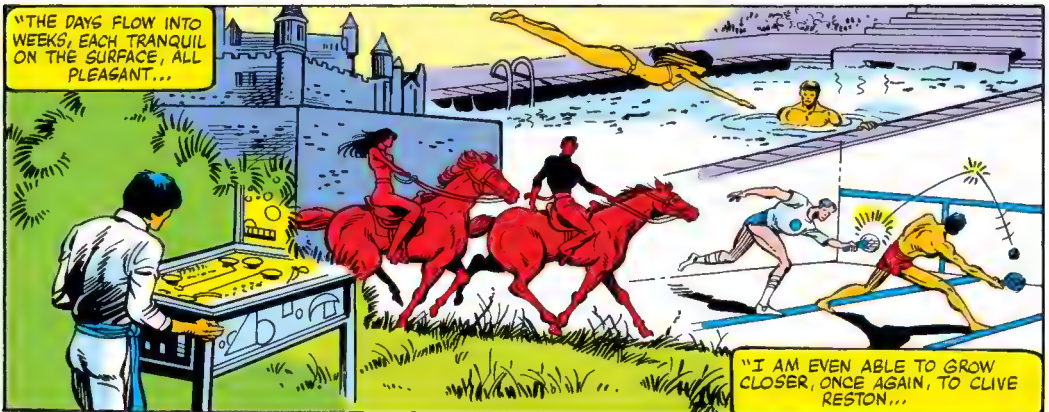
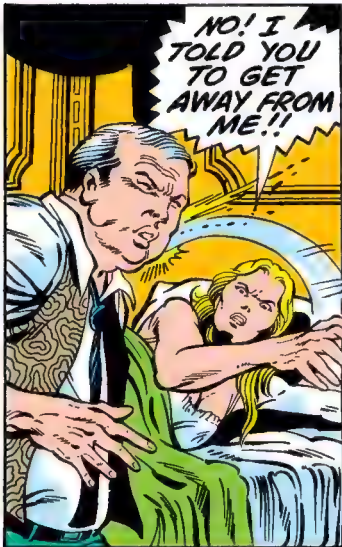
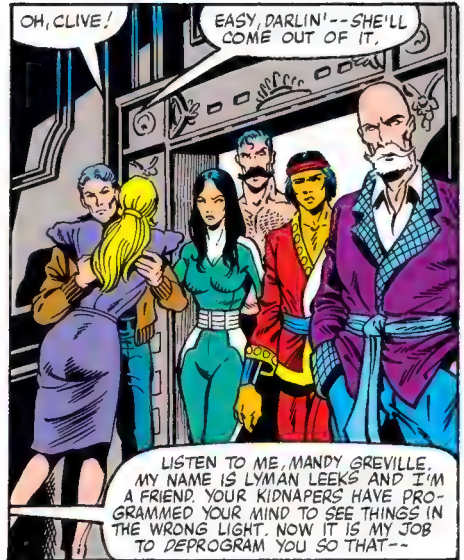
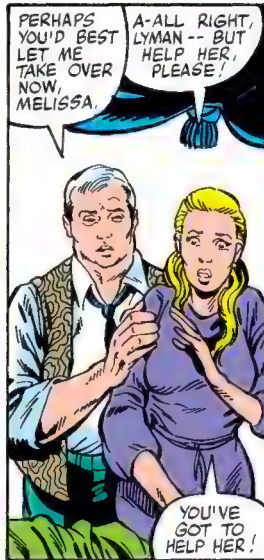
EPICUREAN SNOB, ACTUALLY.



THIS IS ONE OF THE ART GALLERIES. WE'VE BEEN STRUGGLING WITH BLACK JACK TO KEEP THOSE DREADFUL "BARBARIAN POSTERS" OF HIS OUT OF HERE.

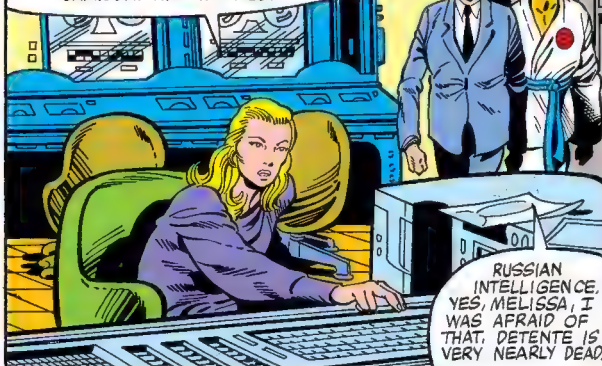






"... BUT EVERY MINUTE OF THE TIME HAS BEEN EDGED WITH UNDER-
LYING URGENCY, AND A SENSE OF APPROACHING DANGER.

I'VE BEEN RUNNING FURTHER COMPUTER
CHECKS ON SAMISDAT AND HIS DAWNING
LIGHT CULT, SIR DENIS -- WITH RECURRENT
THREADS POINTING TO A LINK BETWEEN
SAMISDAT AND THE KGB.

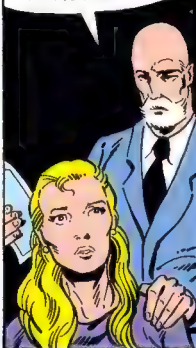


RUSSIAN
INTELLIGENCE.
YES, MELISSA, I
WAS AFRAID OF
THAT. DETENTE IS
VERY NEARLY DEAD.

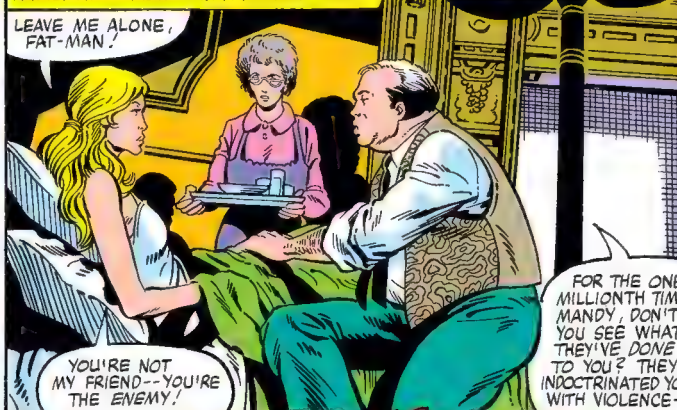
BESIDES, SAMISDAT
IS FROM RUMANIA,
PART OF THE SOVIET
BLOC, AND I DON'T
CARE HOW LUNATIC
HIS CULT MEMBERS
ARE -- THAT HIJACK
OF WEST GERMAN
WEAPONRY SMELLED
LIKE THE WORK OF
SOVIET
PROFESSIONALS.



WELL, WOULD YOU
CARE TO CHECK ON
YOUR SISTER? WITH
YOUR UNCLE CONFINED
TO THE MINISTRY OF
DEFENSE, YOU'RE
THE CLOSEST
FAMILY SHE'S GOT,
MELISSA...



"... AND EVEN THOUGH THERE'S BEEN PRECIOUS LITTLE PROGRESS THESE
PAST WEEKS, LEEKS CLAIMS THE KEY TO DEPROGRAMMING LIES IN
RE-ESTABLISHING A SENSE OF NORMALCY, MAKING THE SUBJECT SEE HER
FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN A FORMER LIGHT.



LEAVE ME ALONE,
FAT-MAN!

YOU'RE NOT
MY FRIEND--YOU'RE
THE ENEMY!

FOR THE ONE-
MILLIONTH TIME,
MANDY, DON'T
YOU SEE WHAT
THEY'VE DONE
TO YOU? THEY
INDOCTRINATED YOU
WITH VIOLENCE--

"-- BRAINWASHED YOU, TURNED YOU
AGAINST YOUR FORMER FRIENDS--
AGAINST SOCIETY!"



REMEMBER, MANDY, WE
MUST ELIMINATE OUR
ENEMIES. THEY'RE BLIND
-- ONLY WE SEE THE
DAWNING LIGHT.



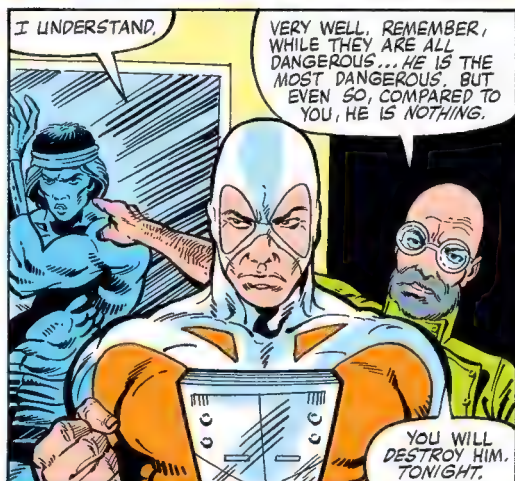
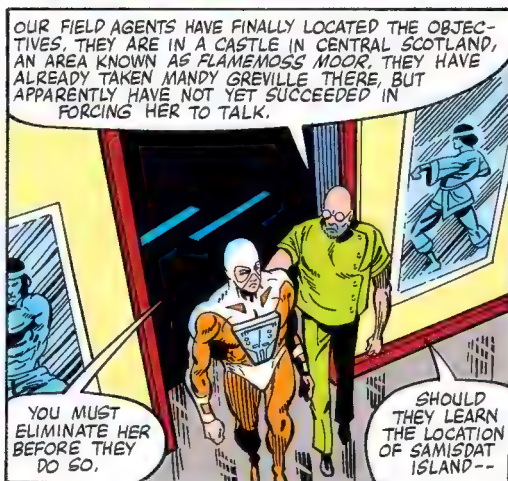
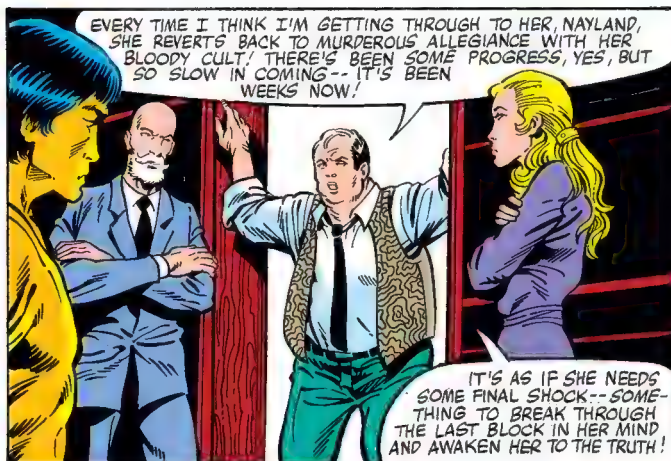
NO! THEY HELPED
ME! THEY MADE
ME SEE THE
LIGHT!

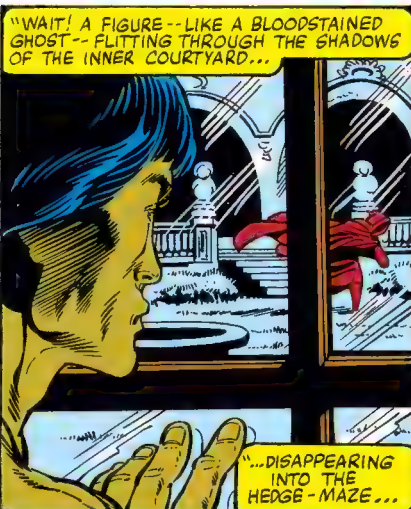
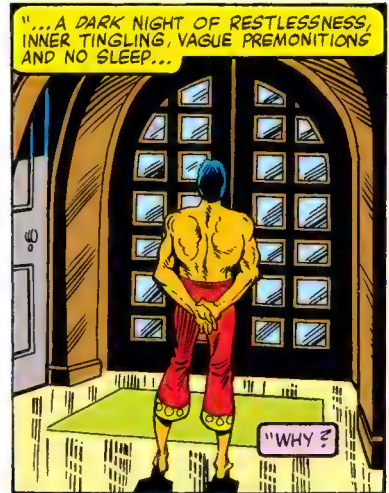
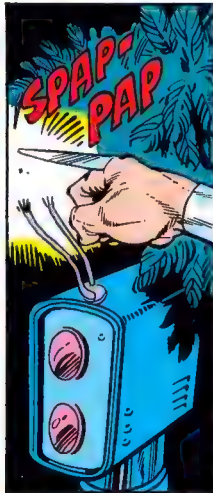
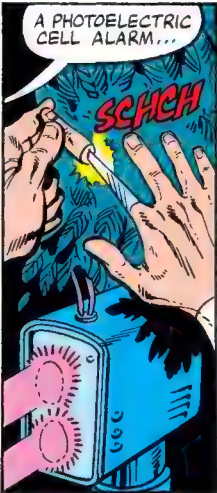
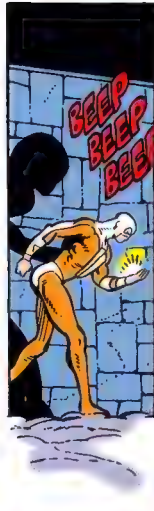
THEY LET ME SEE
THE TRUTH ABOUT
DEVILS LIKE YOU--
ALL OF YOU!!

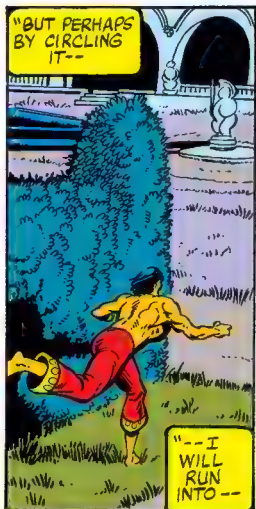
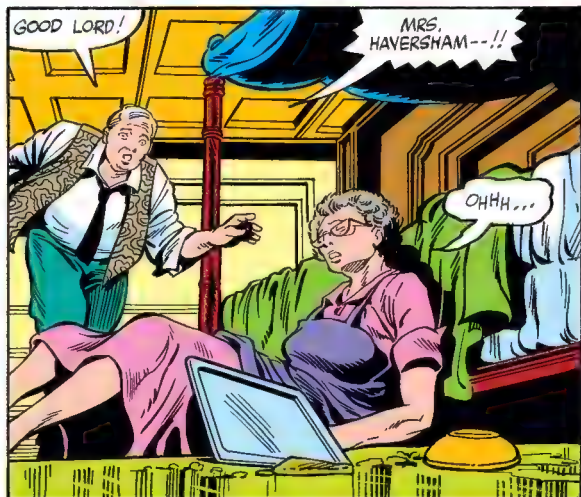
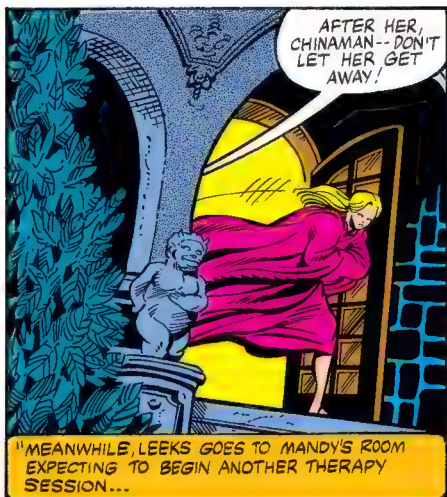
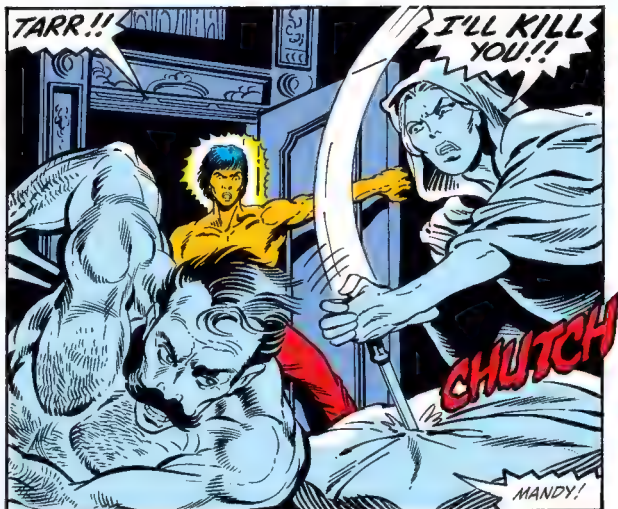
BLAST IT, GIRL, THEY BLINDED YOU TO THE
TRUTH -- BLINDED YOU TO ALL REASON-- ALL
RECOGNITION OF REALITY! WE'RE YOUR
FRIENDS!

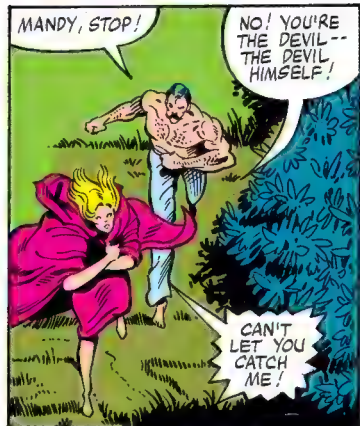
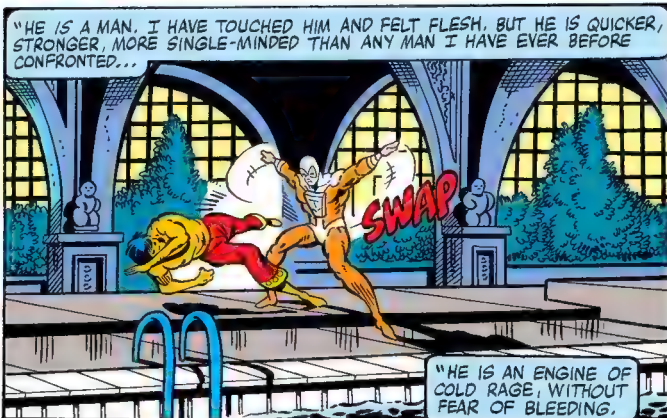
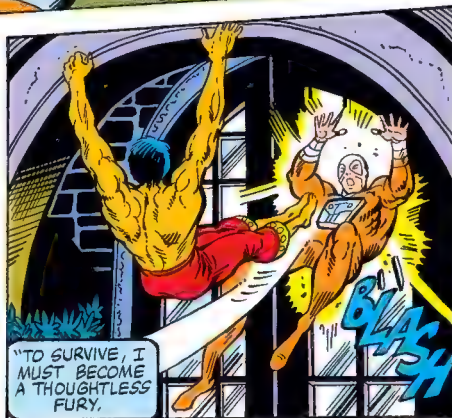
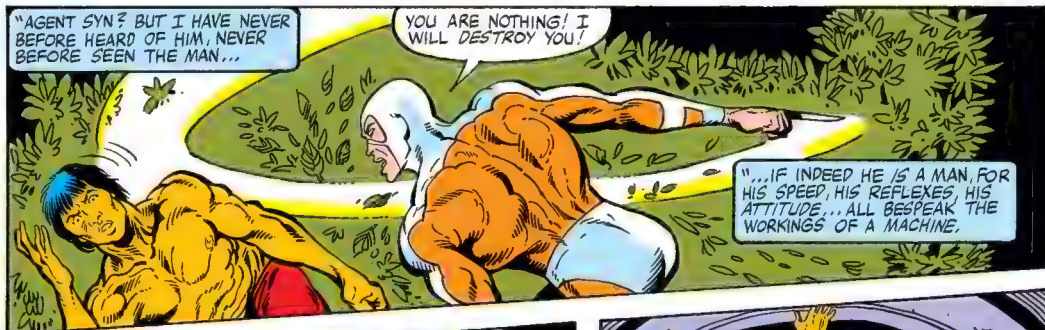


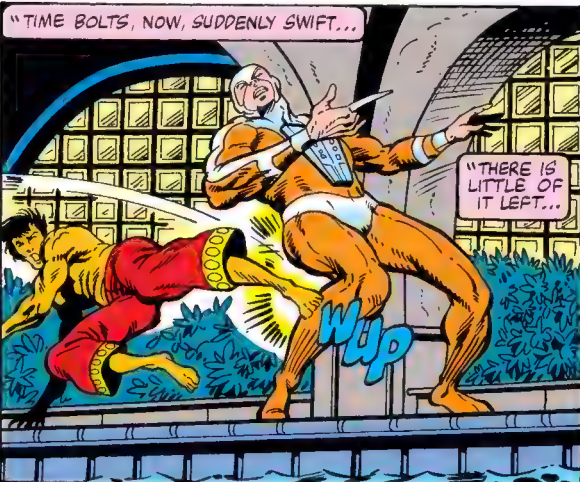
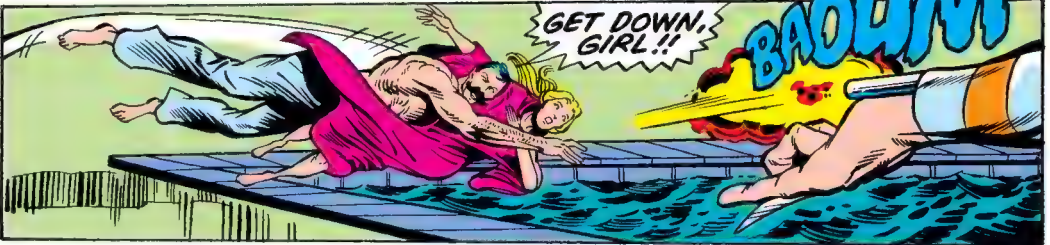
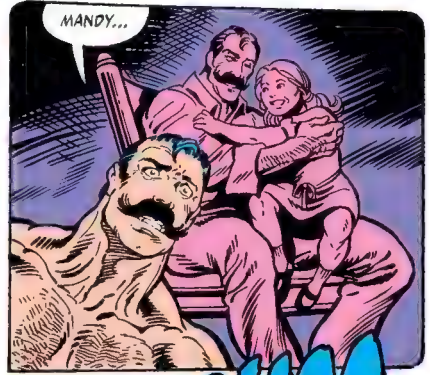
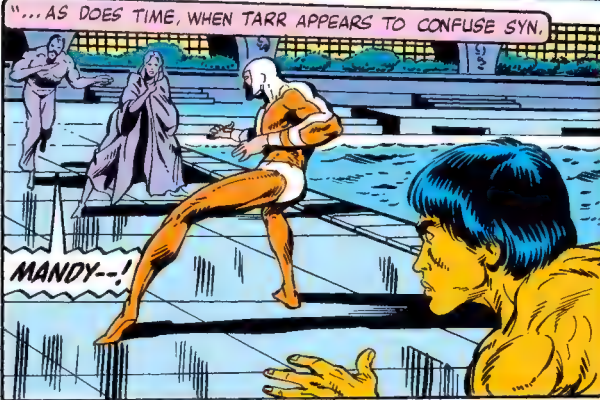
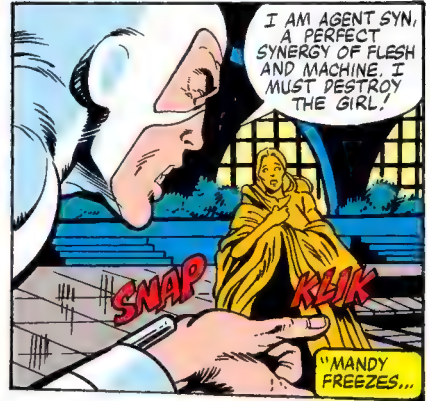
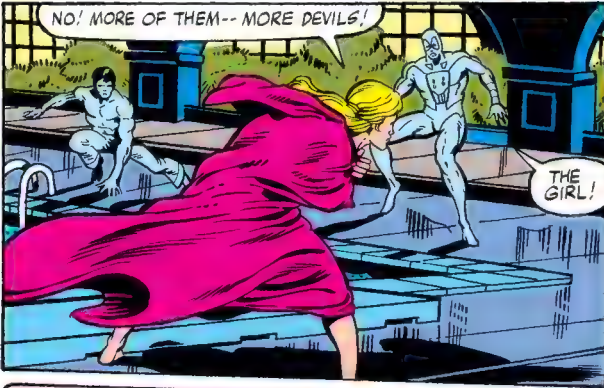
MELISSA IS YOUR
SISTER!!

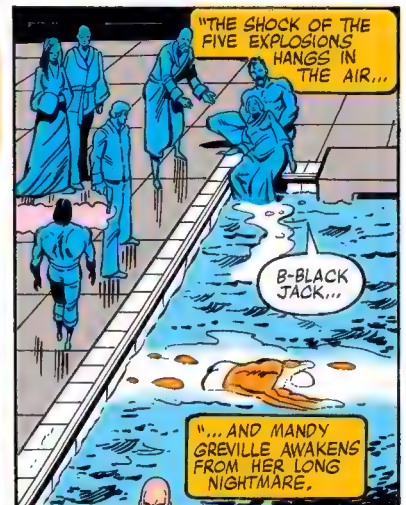
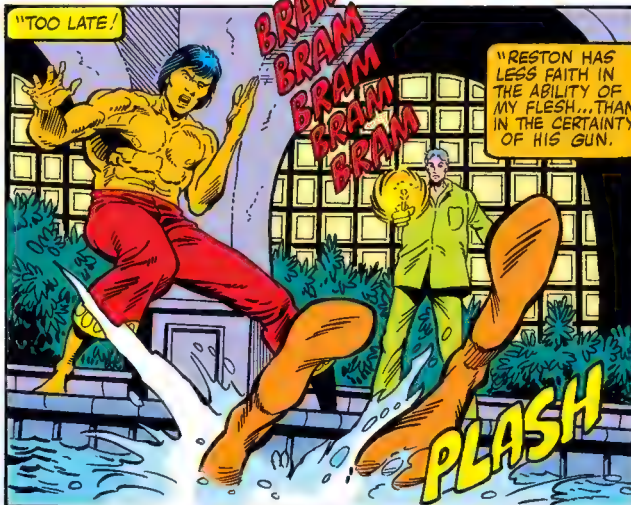
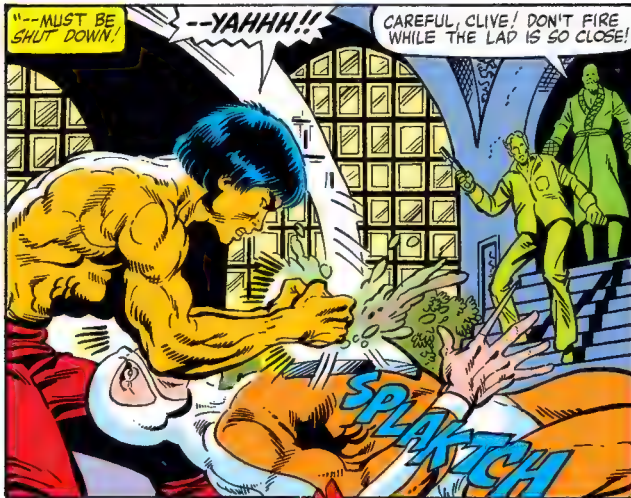












MEDITATIONS

CALL ME SHANG-CHI, AS MY FATHER DID, WHEN HE SHAPED MY MIND AND BODY IN THE VACUUM OF HIS HONAN, CHINA RETREAT. I LEARNED MANY THINGS FROM MY FATHER: THAT MY NAME MEANS "THE RISING AND ADVANCING OF A SPIRIT," AND THAT MY BODY COULD BE FORGED INTO A LIVING WEAPON THROUGH THE DISCIPLINE OF KUNG FU. SINCE THEN, I HAVE LEARNED THAT MY FATHER IS DR. FU MANCHU, THE MOST INSIDIOUSLY EVIL MAN ON EARTH... AND THAT TO HONOR HIM WOULD BRING NOTHING BUT DISHONOR TO THE SPIRIT OF MY NAME.

THERE IS MUCH I DO NOT KNOW... AND IT CAUSES ME GREAT PAIN, BUT THIS PAIN IS THE FIRST STEP TO FURTHER KNOWLEDGE... FOR IF I THOUGHT, PAINLESSLY, THAT ALL KNOWLEDGE WERE MINE TO COMMAND... WOULD I NOT STOP SEEKING MORE?

HATRED IS PROGRAMMED INTO A FOE'S INNOCENCE. THUS, WHEN I STRIKE, IT IS NOT AT A FOE... BUT AT HIS HATRED.

WHILE SKILL WITH WEAPONS IS POSSIBLE TO ATTAIN, IT IS MERELY A CRUTCH TO OVERCOME A LACK OF FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS... SKILLS WHICH NOT ONLY RENDER A WEAPON UNNECESSARY, BUT A HINDRANCE AS WELL.

WHAT ONE KNOWS... IS NOT ALWAYS THE TRUTH.

THE STRONGEST WEAPON IS ONE'S BODY... EVEN IF IT IS THE MIND'S WEAKEST SHIELD.

WHY MUST THE SOUND OF MY NAME... SIGNAL NOTHING BUT VIOLENCE? WHY MUST MY SPIRIT ALWAYS BE SO TORN, SO SHATTERED?

BY NATURE, MEN ARE NEARLY ALIKE; BY PRACTICE, THEY BECOME STRANGERS.

WORDS IN COMBAT ARE LIKE POISON IN A CUP OF WATER.

THE MIND IS A PEARL INSIDE AN OYSTER SHELL--THE SKULL. LIKE THE PEARL, THE MIND OCCUPIES BUT A SMALL PORTION OF ITS HOME... YET IT IS THE MOST PRECIOUS PORTION... FOR THIS PEARL OF WISDOM CAN UNDERSTAND ITS HOME, THE WORLD, THE UNIVERSE... AND ITSELF.

KNOWING THAT WORDS ARE TOOLS OF COMMUNICATION, IS IT NOT STRANGE THAT THESE TOOLS EXIST IN SO MANY FORMS... A DIFFERENT FORM FOR EACH REGION OF THE WORLD...? MISUNDERSTANDING, AND CONFLICT, ARE INEVITABLE.

WHY MUST HATE EVER BOTTLE ITSELF INSIDE... WHERE IT MAY BREED ONLY WITH ITSELF?

THE WIND IS, AND OFFERS PROOF OF ITSELF BY BEING. THOSE WHO SEEK TO PROVE THEMSELVES THROUGH VIOLENCE HAVE LEARNED NOTHING FROM THE CARESS OF A COOL BREEZE.

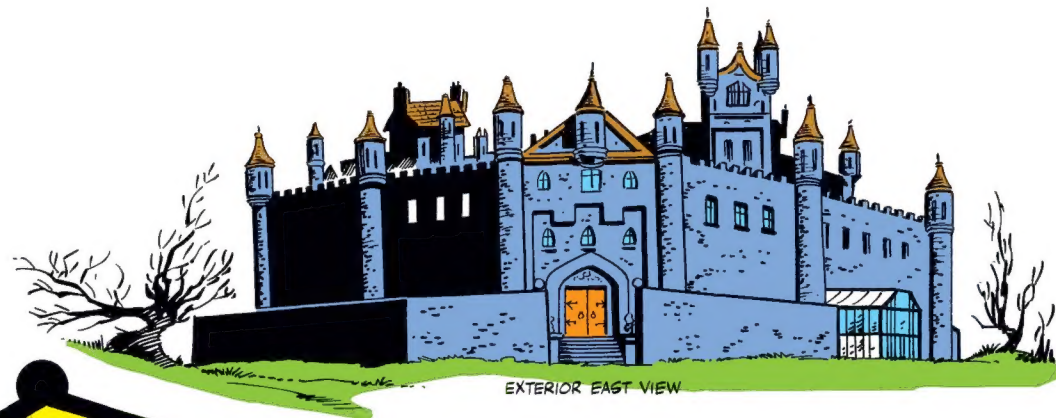
THOUGH MY SPIRIT SCREAMS OTHERWISE, I WILL DO... WHAT I MUST.

STORMHAVEN:

HEADQUARTERS OF "FREELANCE RESTORATIONS, LTD."
LOCATED ON FLAMEMOSS MOOR,
CENTRAL SCOTLAND.

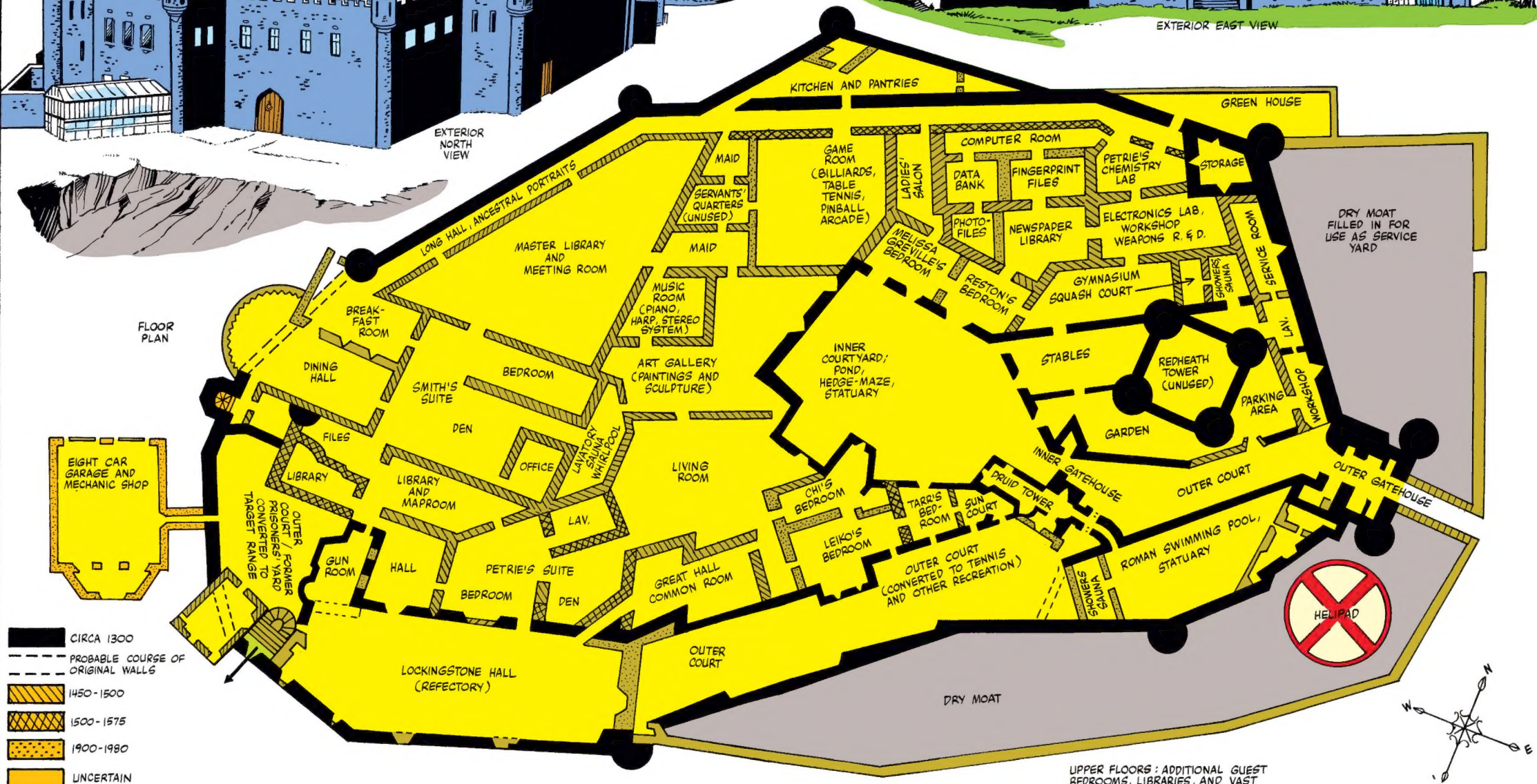


EXTERIOR NORTH VIEW



EXTERIOR EAST VIEW

FLOOR PLAN

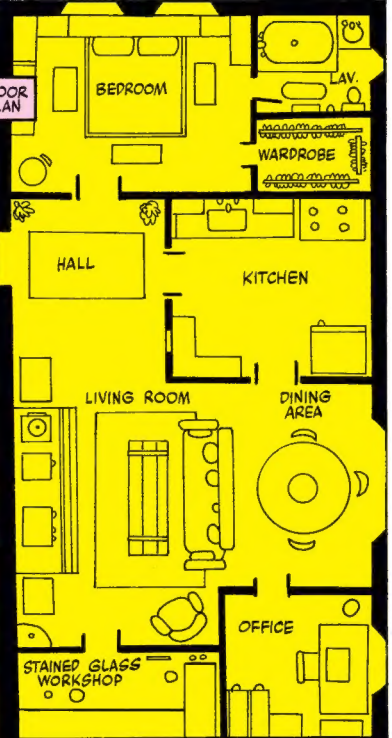


UPPER FLOORS: ADDITIONAL GUEST BEDROOMS, LIBRARIES, AND VAST UNUSED SECTIONS (CLOSED OFF).

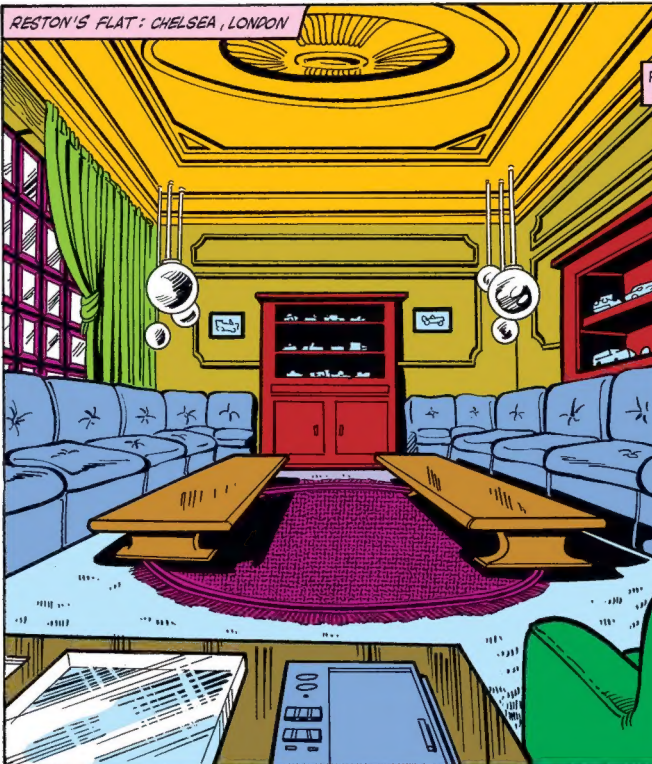
LEIKO'S FLAT: SOHO, LONDON



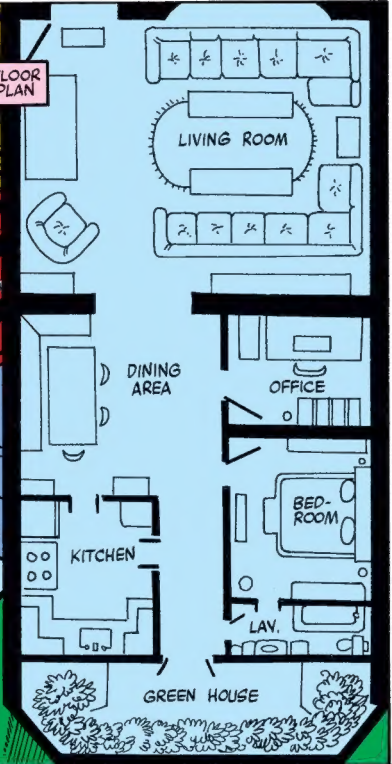
FLOOR PLAN



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MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP

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THE GREAT FU MANCHU DEBATE, REVISITED

The completion of our latest Fu Manchu saga has, as expected, further fanned the flames of controversy surrounding our treatment of the Sax Rohmer character. First up is old friend Bill Wu...

Dear Doug:

I've been reading your latest Fu Manchu adventure with particular interest since you expressed a desire to make Fu Manchu a more human, individualized villain, moving him away from his original identity as the "Yellow Peril incarnate." I can see that you have developed his character further; unfortunately, as I've previously suggested, our positions are just too far apart to be resolved within the confines of this magazine.

I have written earlier about the importance I place on balancing good and evil characters of identifiable racial and ethnic backgrounds. You have reached a virtual balance in MOKF and I'm pleased with that. However, part of the reason I emphasized that concern is that it is one that *can* be achieved within the boundaries of MOKF, as you've demonstrated. The rest of what I would like ideally to see is beyond consideration for MOKF as it has existed so far. For instance, the villains I would prefer to see would not be aged mandarins of a China that has not existed for a long time but would be varieties of real and more immediate villains — like your Carlton Velcro, for instance, and people associated with crime syndicates, corporate crime, and other such concerns. I am not advocating a return to self-righteous, condescending "relevance" as was once practiced in comics, though this may sound like it. Mainly, though, the international espionage in MOKF makes these concerns unlikely on a regular basis. Further, I have serious objections — unmentioned since the first few letters I wrote to MOKF before you took over the writing, Doug — about the spy-line itself. Perhaps I can express it most briefly by saying that the "games of deceit and death" bother me ultimately more than they bother Shang-Chi.

I have not been holding these back deliberately; they simply became neglected during the time our correspondence had continued. I apologize if my mentioning these issues only now seems somehow misleading or dishonest. I have just been aware that my own goals for a magazine such as this are so far from what has created your popular and lucrative success that I saw little point in pursuing some of them. I have sincerely expressed admiration for your scripting abilities; I am, of course, here differing with you only in the larger concept of the book — never its quality. I appreciate your efforts but in the matter of Fu Manchu I'm afraid I can only reiterate my opposition. This is not pleasant after all the fine stories you've written, but my enjoyment as well as my intellectual concern has always been limited in the end by these reservations. I hope to go on enjoying your intricate plots, fine characterization, and the still-rare sight of Asian protagonists. As before, though, I'll have to enjoy them with some reservations, some anger, and general disappointment.

Bill Wu
4414 Homestead Dr.
Prairie Village, KS

Shortly after the above letter made its way into the Marvel Bulpen, and was forwarded to Doug along with the rest of the MOKF mail, a small and somewhat mysterious package from the Orient (studded with beautifully exotic stamps) appeared in Doug's private mailbox. It turned out to be a cassette tape-recording of a "missive" dictated by Bill Wu whilst traveling by rail through the mountains of China. An appropriate passage of the tape deserves transcription: "This is a long way from the world of American popular culture, but I happened to bring issue 90 with me, so here I am. You'll recall in my last letter I expressed a preference for

stories of greater social significance over the spy stories. I had no sooner sent that letter off than issue 90 appeared, of course, with its story of Asian-American gangs set in New York City. I was, ah, greatly amused by the irony of the timing of the two and I hope you got some entertainment out of the chance occurrence. The high point of all this irony, of course, appears on page 7. In my letter I expressed my discomfort with the spy stories by saying I despised the 'games of deceit and death' even more than Shang-Chi, and then here on page 7 we have Leiko telling Shang-Chi that her brother 'despises games of deceit and death even more than you do.' I'm still laughing about this. I will be in Honan province next week and intend to avoid anything resembling a secret retreat until I find out exactly who brought me here and why. I am suspicious that every time you finish a Fu Manchu epic I wind up in East Asia..."

Just coincidence, Bill. Or maybe... synchronicity?

Next up, a less serious commentary on the Fu Manchu saga...

Dear Doug and Mike:

After buying issue #89, I decided that to do the series proper justice I would have to reread the entire epic from the beginning, not just from #83 (and certainly not from #15!) but from #71. So, after several hours and many drops of Visine, the task is done and I'm a little disappointed. Don't get me wrong; the writing and the art are both excellent, and that's the problem. You see, the story is over; I can never read it for the first time again. During the "Warriors of the Golden Dawn" I was literally gasping for breath by the end of each issue. And now, to paraphrase a well-known talk-show host, I hold in my hands the *final issue*. Obviously there will be other future issues, finer ones, poorer ones, and ones just as good, but I still can't shake the feeling of finality I've just experienced after reading "The Dragons."

Anyway, now that Fu Manchu is dead (he is, isn't he?), Shang-Chi can go on to other things. We will see Fah Lo Suee's attempts to reorganize MI-6, Chi's relationship with Leiko, Leiko's with Reston, and Reston's with Chi. Will Black Jack go to a chiropractor and continue collecting Frazetta posters? (By the way, how did Tarr like the first issue of EPIC?) What about the remnants of Fu's army? And Zaran? How does Ducharme feel about being a widow? I'm looking forward to these answers, but not too soon, mind you.

I never thought I would say it, but this mag is now equalled in excellence only by X-MEN. FF and AVENGERS used to be up there, but AVENGERS is inconsistent in its quality lately and FF is starting to seem a little confused. But now that you're the new writer on the FF... come on, Doug, I'm rooting for ya!

Matt Lehman
278 Lowell Rd.
Sayville, NY 11782

Thanks, Matt. But as for the question of Fu Manchu being truly dead or not, we can only refer you to our final missive, which was printed in large, boldly menacing capital letters. No salutation — just the following message and signature...

I SHALL RETURN, WHEN THE DECADENT SOCIETY OF THE WEST LEAST EXPECTS.
—Fu Manchu

We suspect the man's right — but, we hope, not for a loonnnng while...

In the meantime, plans are already hotly afoot between editor Jim Salicrup and Doug & Mike to make issue #100 (coming up fast!) a rather special double-sized. And next issue, Shang-Chi and Leiko finally confront Samisdat himself. Doug has already seen the first eleven pages penciled by Mike; they're some of Mr. Zeck's very best. Show up in 30 days and you can see for yourself — indeed, you'll see all 22 pages, inked by Gene Day to boot!